

Deniece Williams



This is Niecey

When the faithful flocked to hear the young June Deniece Williams sing in church in her hometown of Gary, Indiana, they were touched by the voice of an angel. Because Niecy was in touch with the magic of her gift. She toured the world with Stevie Wonder as a member of his backup group, the wonderous Wonderlove. And her light shined again in the production arms of Maurice White and Charles Stepney. Backed by the airy tones of Earth, Wind & Fire, the collective crafted *This Is Niecy*, a masterful piece of pop and soul balladry.

Where The Songbird Takes Flight

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. It's Important To Me (4:19) | 5. Free (5:58) |
| 2. That's What Friends Are For (4:26) | 6. Watching Over (3:50) |
| 3. How'd I Know That Love Would Slip Away (3:49) | 7. If You Don't Believe (7:58) |
| 4. Cause You Love Me, Baby (4:07) | 8. Free (Single Version) (2:50) |

Bonus Track:

8. Free (Single Version) (2:50)

Original Recordings Produced by Maurice White & Charles Stepney
for Kalimba Productions
Produced for Reissue by Leo Sacks
Mastered by Joseph M. Palmaccio at Sony Music Studios, New York

legacyrecordings.com



RHYTHM & SOUL



† CERTAIN COMPUTERS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE DIGITAL FILE PORTION OF THIS DISC. USE SUBJECT TO APPLICABLE END USER LICENSE AGREEMENT.

© 2005 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT / © 1976 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT / Manufactured and Distributed by Columbia Records, A Division of SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT / 550 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022-3211 / "Columbia," "Legacy" and

Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada. / WARNING: All Rights Reserved. Unauthorized duplication is a violation of applicable laws.

This package consists of previously released material.



Unauthorized copying is punishable under federal law.

Playback: CD/DVD/SA/CD/PC/Mac/PC; Windows 98SE/ME/2000SP4/97 Pentium II IE 5.0 Directx 9.0 128 MB RAM; Mac: OK

Ripping: PC: Windows Media Player 9.0. Mac: OK

Portable Devices: Windows Media (playfonseur), Sony Walkman digital music players

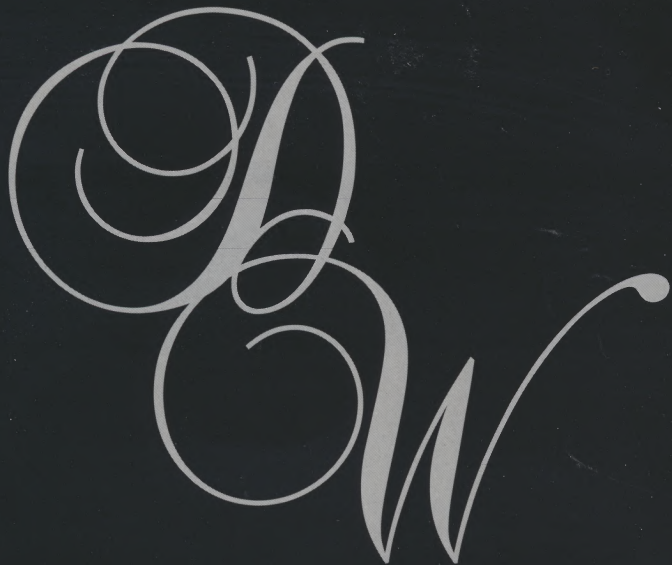
Limited Copies

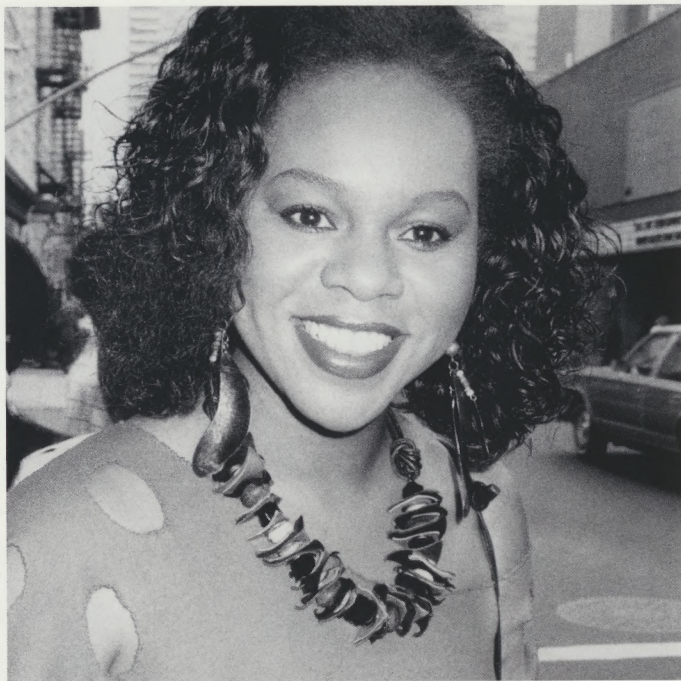
? cd.sonybmg.com/ucp README.HTML



CONTENT PROTECTED

See Reverse for Features





1. It's Important To Me (4:19)

(D. Williams/C. McDonald/
F. Baskett)

**2. That's What Friends
Are For** (4:26)

(D. Williams/C. McDonald/
F. Baskett/L. Groves)
Columbia single 10556
Charted 7/2/77; Weeks: 8;
Peak: #65 R&B, #103 Pop

**3. How'd I Know That Love
Would Slip Away** (3:49)

(D. Williams/C. McDonald/
L. Groves)

**4. Cause You Love
Me, Baby** (4:07)

(D. Williams)
Columbia single 10429 (B-side
of "Free")
Charted 6/4/77; Weeks: 3;
Peak: #74 R&B

5. Free (5:58)

(D. Williams/H. Redd/N. Watts/
S. Greene)
Columbia single 10429
Charted 11/13/76; Weeks: 20;
Peak: #2 R&B, #25 Pop

6. Watching Over (3:50)

(D. Williams/M. White/F. White/
V. White/J. Peters/A. McKay)

7. If You Don't Believe (7:58)

(D. Williams/C. McDonald/
F. Baskett)

Bonus Track:

8. Free (Single Version) (2:50)

(D. Williams/H. Redd/N. Watts/
S. Greene)

All selections ©1976 Sony BMG
Music Entertainment



Flight

of the

Songbird

By Deniece Williams
with Virginia Prescott

*S*ome magic showed up on these sessions. I went into the studio with Maurice White with total confidence. I was in awe of his work with Earth, Wind & Fire, and I was still getting over the fact that I had just spent the past five years with Stevie Wonder, that someone like Stevie had heard something in me. Now Maurice was producing my songs with musicians I never dreamed I would play with. There was an incredible spirit of creativity in those hours that I'll never forget.

The music had been birthed on one level, and now Maurice and Charles Stepney were bringing it to another.

When I wrote "Free," I thought I was the only person who had those kinds of feelings, of wanting to be free. You know that wish - that secret longing, to just feel free from the life I was living. People came to me and said, "You've found something that has tapped into my heart." Originally, I sent the songs that make up the album to the Earth, Wind & Fire office, because I thought they might work well for Philip Bailey's range. And then I learned that 'Reece was looking for a female artist, and that he had seen me on tour with Stevie.



My cousin John introduced me to Stevie and suddenly I was auditioning for his singing group, Wonderlove. It was a new experience. I didn't know you were supposed to prepare a song - I didn't even know any songs that we didn't sing in church! And never mind that there were about 40 other singers there. Some even brought their own keyboard players. When they asked what I wanted to sing, I just went blank.

So I looked at Stevie and he started singing "Teach Me Tonight." I figured it out and sang it with him, and a few weeks later I got the call: I was chosen for Wonderlove. I had a four-month-old and an 18-month old at the time, and I

was working in a nursery school. It was incredible - and confusing - at the same time.

I was just as surprised by the success of *This Is Niecy*. I wasn't thinking about becoming a star. It was just a precious opportunity to release my music, to get it out there. I was blessed that I was given the freedom to express myself the way I wanted. I had writing partners who supported me, and Maurice gave me the stage for my voice. To have had that kind of opportunity, to have experienced that situation, was the greatest gift.

My grandmother was a nurse, my mother was a nurse and I was going to be a nurse. We worshipped in a Pentecostal church choir with real Holly Rollers who said you would burn if you sang anything

other than gospel. Being a nurse was respected. It was safe. It went with our faith and religion. I didn't love it and I didn't know what to do with myself, so I thought, "What the heck?" I hadn't finished college and didn't have a degree. But I knew that I had a gift.

Life on the road was a painful time for me. I felt that I was out of the will of God. I wasn't comfortable in my own skin. I wasn't comfortable with the people who were around me. I felt so different from them. To me, this was work - it wasn't about being glamorous. I wasn't seduced by that star treatment. I was a single mom with two kids and it was tough out there by myself. Only my mother supported my decision - no one else in my family did. When you come from the church, you have a community and a social circle. They could not stand behind me in this. It was a hurtful time, but obviously there were other plans for me.

I hated the road. I still do. My whole attitude was, "Any minute now I'm out of here." It wasn't really until I'd done five or six projects that I realized this was

my life. Philip Bailey used to say, "You're always running. You're never really present. You always have one foot out the door." It was true, I never felt I was doing the right thing. My heart was in the music, not on the stage. That's how I was feeling when I was writing for this

album. Songs like "Cause You Love Me, Baby" and "That's What Friends Are For" came from what was in my heart at that time. I've always been introspective; it's what helps me to write.



I can't explain the success of *This Is Niacy*. I just think of it as self-expression in its purest form. I was being myself - that's the most important thing an artist

can do. At the end of the day it had to be me.

I'm hopeful that I'll record again. I'm writing and I'm in the studio and some of the songs are very special. God has allowed me to nurture my inner voice again.

Virginia Prescott is the director and producer of The Connection for National Public Radio. She listens to "Free" in traffic jams.



**Produced by Maurice White & Charles
Stepney for Kalimba Productions
Engineered by George Massenburg**

Guitars: Al McKay
Piano, Electric Piano: Jerry Peters
Drums, Percussion: Freddie White
Drums: Maurice White
Bass: Verdine White
Background Vocals: Sydney Barnes,
Maurice White, Deniece Williams
Trumpets: Oscar Brashear, Steve Madaio
Trombones: George Bohanon, Randal Aldcroft
French Horns: Sidney Muldrow, Gale Robinson
Woodwinds: Plas Johnson, Ray Pizzi,
Terry Harrington, Ernie Watts

Recorded at Wally Heider 3, Los Angeles;
Davlen Recorders, North Hollywood,
and Kendun Recorders, Burbank, Calif.
Assistant Engineers: Dean Rod, Steve Hodge

Produced for Reissue by Leo Sacks
Mastered by Joseph M. Palmaccio at
Sony Music Studios, New York

Legacy A&R: Steve Berkowitz

Project Director: Joy Monfried
A&R Coordination: Patty Matheny, Darren
Salmieri, Stacey Boyle & Jeremy Holiday

Art Direction: Howard Fritzon
Design: Jo Hay/MG Design
Packaging Manager: Bridget McGoldrick
Photography: Front cover photo & booklet back
cover: Ethan A. Russell; page 2: Vincent Zuffante/
Starfile; pages 4 & 9: Michael Putland/Retna
Thanks to Michael Kull and Keith Dorgan at
the SONY BMG Tape Library

Special thanks to Clarence McDonald

Originally released in 1976 as Columbia 34242
LP debuted October 30, 1976; weeks: 36; peak:
#33 pop

Chart positions courtesy of Joel Whitburn &
Billboard Publications

CK 63932 Deniece Williams LOVE SONGS
CK 64839 Gonna Take A Miracle:
The Best Of Deniece Williams
CK 85655 That's What Friends Are For
(with Johnny Mathis)

What are you going to listen to next?
For a complete listing of titles from Legacy
Recordings, please visit us at:
legacyrecordings.com
sonymusic.com

© 2005 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT /
© 1976 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT /
Manufactured and Distributed by Columbia Records,
A Division of SONY BMG MUSIC
ENTERTAINMENT / 550 Madison Avenue, New
York, NY 10022-3211 / "Columbia," "Legacy" and
■ Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada. /
WARNING: All Rights Reserved. Unauthorized
duplication is a violation of applicable laws.
This Compact Disc was manufactured to meet critical
quality standards. If you believe the disc has a
manufacturing defect, please call our Quality
Management Department at 1-800-255-7514.
New Jersey residents should call 856-722-8224.



RHYTHM & SOUL



Deniece Williams

This Is Niecey

1. It's Important To Me (4:19)
 2. That's What Friends Are For (4:26)
 3. How'd I Know That Love Would Slip Away (3:49)
 4. Cause You Love Me, Baby (4:07)
 5. Free (5:58)
 6. Watching Over (3:50)
 7. If You Don't Believe (7:58)
- BONUS TRACK:**
8. Free (Single Version) (2:50)



RHYTHM & SOUL



THE COPY CONTROL LOGO IS A TRADEMARK OF IFPI AND IS USED UNDER LICENSE.

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO



FBI Anti-Piracy Warning:
Unauthorized copying is
punishable under federal law.

CK 93814

© 2005 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT /



© 1976 SONY BMG MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT / "Columbia," "Legacy" and

Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada.

